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1 May 1970

Section titled "Editorial Division"

Recommendation # 2

ED concurs in the recommendation that the DDI each year assign one or two capable officers to Editorial Division for a 2-year tour of duty. Not only should this create a cadre of competent younger reviewers who might replace ED retirees, but also it should lead to better understanding in CIA producing offices of NIS concepts, objectives, and procedures. A reciprocal infusion of some of ED's aging but experienced talent for specialized review and editing might also make a real contribution to current analytic output in OCI, OER, and OSR.

Recommendation # 3

As regards the editing of geographic monographs produced by Geography Division, arrangements are being made for geographic specialists in Editorial Division to undertake this responsibility in addition to present NIS editing.

Recommendation # 4

Production of commercial encyclopedias is on so large a scale of publication that production processes differ markedly from those suitable for the more limited NIS issuances. ED

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concur, nevertheless, in the recommendation that visits to major encyclopedia publishers by D/BGI and senior NIS staff should be explored as to feasibility and usefulness.

Recommendation # 5

This recommendation reflects rather basic misunderstandings of the normal OBGI editorial process and the day-to-day problems involved.

1. It must be emphasized that the impression that only DIA contributions are particularly poor or variable in quality is erroneous. The problem of contributions sometimes requiring excessive editorial effort in OBGI has involved all contributing agencies and Agency components; some offices have been greater offenders than others.

2. Normal editorial processing -- involving the forwarding by OBGI of worknotes and/or personal conferences between editor and contributor -- frequently results in extensive revisions, the updating and rewriting of large portions and the repair or redo of maps, charts, and graphics by contributing offices (rather than by OBGI).

3. When warranted by special circumstances, submissions are in fact returned from time to time to contributors. Such action is appropriate when 1) the inadequacies of the manuscript can only be corrected by further contributor research, 2) a sudden radical change in the country situation calls for general

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updating and reappraisalment, or 3) embassy or interagency review indicates major defects calling for extensive revision or re-writing.

Experience has proven, however, that the practice of returning below-standard NIS submissions, generally, tends to be counter-productive.

1. To build and document a case for rejecting a section, substantial OBGI editorial time and effort must be invested to identify specific shortcomings and to spell out the precise nature of the rewriting required. Contrary to the contention in the Summary section of the Report, most of this editorial time and labor is lost when a section is returned as the re-submitted manuscript must usually be entirely reedited from scratch.

2. Analysts are usually willing to take the time necessary to correct items specifically pointed out in editorial worknotes but are extremely resistant to undertaking a complete overhaul of rejected material. If the submitting office assigns a different analyst to the revision, he is unlikely to be significantly more able and informed -- so that the re-submission (even if a new version) is little improvement over the rejected manuscript.

3. Returned sections suffer in scheduling, as compared to normal revising in consultation with the editor. By the

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time the contributing office fits a new rewrite into busy schedules the source materials may be well out of date. The delays required to obtain a rewritten manuscript are rarely justified by improvements in the resubmission.

Section titled "Publication Division"

Recommendation # 10

NIS management
~~The Editorial Division~~ has long been aware of the merits of such a move in the locus of interagency review of General Survey sections, and D/BGI through the NIS Committee has formally urged that all major comments be made and resolved before final editorial processing and Xeroxing. There is one major holdup to effecting this recommendation; successfully moving interagency review to an earlier stage requires strict adherence to scheduled delivery dates to the field and to the departments (delivery to the field should be at least 5 weeks ahead of due date to OBG). Unfortunately, Agency producers in nearly every instance have been unable to meet this earlier delivery date. Further, the suggestion that the Committee review might become a "pro forma" function is to demean its importance and invite the risk of adversely affecting the interagency authority and acceptability of the General Survey.

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Nevertheless, ~~Editorial Division recommends that~~ the Chairman of the NIS Committee ^{will} continue to urge NIS participating agencies to conduct the more detailed reviews at an earlier stage in the coordinating process whenever delivery dates makes this procedure possible.

Section titled "Future of the NIS Program"



Recommendation # 11

Although it bears only indirectly on the recommendation, the implication that the Kissinger handbooks might prove a possible replacement for the General Survey is a misconception of the circumstances surrounding this OCI effort. In the first place, scheduling of the handbooks is designed to parallel the NIS General Survey schedule in order that material for the handbooks may be based directly upon the research and analysis undertaken for the General Survey. The handbooks so far published are essentially abbreviated discussions largely lifted from already written NIS submissions, and to that extent, are obvious duplications. In general, they represent a bare bones account of key country situations without explanatory clarification or analysis. It would be totally misleading to suggest that such skeletal skimmings of selected highlights would satisfy the requirements for basic intelligence which the User Survey indicated are being met by the General Survey.

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2
~~Editorial Division~~ concurs that from time to time, at the discretion of the DDI, certain OCI and OER studies might be included in the NIS. Studies so selected should have community-wide interest and usefulness and be appropriate to the mission and objectives of the NIS Program.

2
~~Editorial Division~~ does not concur in the recommendation that responsibility for the review for publication of NIS basic sections be transferred from OBGI to the producing agencies.

1. This proposal would repudiate the concept of coordinated interagency basic intelligence -- the fundamental tenet of the NIS Program based upon statutory charges to the DCI and CIA.

2. The mere transfer of location of the review function from OBGI to originating offices would neither involve any apparent overall economy nor retain the proven advantages of an independent review.

3. Considering the interdepartmental nature of the NIS Program, a centralized review is essential to maintaining consistency in data, balance in coverage, evenness in quality, and compatibility among the various NIS elements.

4. The report notes correctly that "it would be futile for us to ask DIA to assign more competent analysts to NIS work." It would appear to be equally futile to expect NIS

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producing agencies and components to develop the kind of review/coordination machinery necessary to assume the responsibility which it is proposed OBGI abdicate.

5. The report's principal premise for this recommendation is that the consistently low quality of the basic sections requires an inordinately disproportionate effort in OBGI. It is doubtful that CIA would be warranted in bearing the publication expense for material over which it has no control in a program for which it has managerial responsibility.

6. Finally, the recommendation runs counter to the plan adopted by the DDI in response to the 1969 User Survey, which the report views as "both sound and logical."

~~It~~ submit~~s~~ that the DDI approach will have the same net effect as that recommended by the IG, i.e., a phased reduction in the overall OBGI processing effort.

1. Changes resulting from the plan include the elimination of all basic sections produced by OCI and OER; one DD/P-produced section remains.

2. By elimination and consolidation, the variety of non-USIB products reviewed in OBGI ^{has} ~~have~~ been reduced from 9 to 2.

3. Finally, indications are that in view of recent budgetary restrictions in that agency, DIA is adopting the suggestions OBGI made concerning a critical examination of the

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continuation in the NIS Program of the more specialized basic sections as well as those of limited use. This should result not only in a complete phaseout of several DIA produced sections but consolidations, changes in format, and further adaptations of ADP, all of which will further reduce OBGI's processing effort and CIA's printing cost as well.

The recommendation concerning the future size of the Editorial Division reflects a misunderstanding of how General Survey sub-missions are reviewed, edited, and coordinated -- apparently assuming this function to be solely the responsibility of the General Survey Branch. The General Survey Branch, whose principal function is coordination, routinely edits only two sections of the General Survey; three sections are edited in the Military Branch and four, in the Socioeconomic Branch. More than 50% of OBGI's total editorial effort (about 18 professionals) is devoted to the General Survey.



Management Considerations

The Chief of the Editorial Division is familiar with the Agency's Honor and Merit Awards and Quality Step Increase Programs as prescribed in HR 20-37 and HR 20-31a(3)(b). Although the Editorial Division has employed both of these programs in recognizing

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singularly deserving employees, it accepts the comment that such employment might be considered conservative. Possibly the problem is less a lack of awareness on the part of Division Chiefs of the purposes for which these management tools can be put than it is a lack of concrete guidance as to Agency, Directorate, and Office norms, trends, and circumstances of use pertaining to these programs.

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Items

1. Agree. Editorial Division people would benefit from some additional non-technical training in the EPIC system.

2. Agree. Editors are continually encouraged by their Division Chief to offer suggestions for improving the content of the NIS.

3. Agree if compatible with quotas limitations. Special clearances for all editors would facilitate conferences at Headquarters with OCI and OER analysts.

4. Not so. Branch meetings are regularly held in the Editorial Division.

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